

Reaching for the Sky

Uganda's Quest for Universal Primary Education

BEPS

Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) Activity

CREATIVE ASSOCIATES INTERNATIONAL²

In collaboration with

CARE, The George Washington University, and GroundWork



Contract No. HNE-F-00-00-00038-00



A group of ten school children, nine boys and one girl, are posed for a photograph outdoors. They are standing in two rows: five in the front and five in the back. All are wearing white short-sleeved shirts with a dark collar and a school crest on the left chest. The boys are wearing dark shorts, while the girl in the front row is wearing a dark skirt. They are standing on a paved path with lush green trees and a building in the background.

WHY DO YOU WANT TO COME TO SCHOOL

My future will be good.

I can perform my level best.

I want to be a church reader.

I want to study how to write and read.

I come to school because I want to be a nurse.

The school life is better than home life.

I come because I want to be a doctor.

I come because I want to be a pilot.

I come to school to be a good leader.

I have been coming to school to learn what I didn't know.

To be a leader of the school.

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Washington, DC

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Preface

This document is the result of research findings on the various basic education activities supported in Uganda from October 2002 through November 2003 as part of the Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) Activity, a multi-year, global activity that promotes educational opportunities in developing and newly independent countries. BEPS, an activity being implemented by Creative Associates International, Inc. (CAII) in cooperation with CARE, GroundWork, and the George Washington University, is funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

The goal of this publication is to tell the story of what has transpired during Phase 1 of a series of interventions in such a way that others in Uganda and throughout Sub-Saharan Africa may learn from it. To research this document, I visited offices, centers, schools, and classes, interviewing USAID and Ministry officials, principals, tutors, teachers, and students. The results of this process are reported here in the narratives and statements of people involved.

I would like to thank a host of people, each of whom played a special role in the preparation of this document:

- ▲ USAID/Uganda, particularly David Bruns and Sarah Mayanja;
- ▲ Uganda's Ministry of Education and Sports, particularly Albert Byamugisha, Margaret Nsereko, Resty Nuziribi, Agrrey Kibenge, and Emmanuel Kusemererwa Araali;
- ▲ Principals and deputy principals, head teachers, coordinating center tutors, and teachers who are implementing the various interventions;
- ▲ CAII's long-term Education Policy and Institutional Advisor, Renuka Pillay, and her dedicated support team of Polly Kiguli and Ssenkindu Godfrey Ssekimpi (now deceased);
- ▲ CAII's local partners in this effort: TERP, Straight Talk Foundation, Mango Tree Foundation, the Need Foundation, and Roses of Mbuyra;
- ▲ Jim Hoxeng, the BEPS Cognizant Technical Officer, USAID;
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- ▲ Jerrold Keilson, Director, Business Development; and
- ▲ Charito Kruvant, Creative Associates' president, who makes it possible for me and others to play a part in this very important work.

Last but not least, I would like to thank the children of Uganda, whose smiles and expressions continue to move me to write and to act. The title of this work reflects one of my most powerful experiences with them. In conducting my research, I was privileged to attend the first whole school assembly for the Presidential Initiative on AIDS Strategy for Communication to Youth (PIASCY) in Luwero District. Just before the opening, I was informed that, as a visitor from America, I would be asked to speak. Amidst the songs, dances, and dramatizations that were being performed, my mind raced to think of what to say to the sea of waiting faces, knowing that my time was short and that my western accent was difficult. I decided to be brief, reinforcing my words with gestures and encouraging them to do the same. I spoke:

**Be happy (pulling up at the corners of my mouth),
Be safe (crossing my arms across the body),
Learn as much as you can (pointing to my head), and
Reach for the sky (arms upstretched).**

During my research, I discovered that the entire initiative is about reaching-about USAID reaching out to the Ministry; about tutors reaching out to the local teachers; about project facilitators reaching out to local organizations working to support the effort; about reaching inside ourselves for new ideas and ways to improve education and life for all of the world's children.

So let's all keep reaching. For if we keep exploring and stretching together, certainly the sky is the limit.

**Cynthia J. Prather
July 2004**

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Acronyms

BEPS	Basic Education and Policy Support Activity
CCT	Coordinating center tutor
EPIA	Education Policy and Institutional Advisor
HIV/AIDS	Human immuno deficiency virus/Acquired immuno deficiency syndrome
LC	Local council
MOES	Ministry of Education and Sports
NGO	Non-governmental organization
PIASCY	Presidential Initiative on AIDS Strategy for Communication to Youth
PTC	Primary teachers college
RDC	Resident District Commissioner
TDMS	Teacher Development and Management System
UPE	Universal primary education
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

If education is a basic right, as provided in Article 30 of the Constitution, 1995;
If education is a tool to eradicate illiteracy and ignorance;
If education can build knowledge and develop the skills to improve productivity and to eradicate poverty, and improve life;
If education can improve attitude about self, attitude about others, and attitude towards work;
If education is an empowering process leading to active participation in the democratization process....

Then depriving anyone of education is to perpetually condemn him or her to live in poverty, ignorance, exploitation, and indignity.

The Honorable Yoweri Museveni, H.D., the President of Uganda
UPE National Conference, August 2003



I. Introduction

This is a story about Uganda and its varied efforts to achieve education reform through the Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) Activity. It's about a young, independent republic committed to providing education for all of its children within the context of swelling enrollments, limited resources, and challenging circumstances. It's about behavior change in children, with quality improvement at the basis.

Universal primary education is a part of Uganda's sectorwide approach to education reform. An Education Funding Agencies Group, comprised of members from multiple development partners,¹ has been helping to implement this approach. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is a project-implementing agency within that group. Since 2001, BEPS has been one of USAID's primary contracts.

With the goal of universal primary education before them, the Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES) worked cooperatively with USAID and the BEPS Activity to help bring about change and advance the reform. Educators, parents, and other stakeholders were convened. Needs were identified, ideas for addressing them were brainstormed, and pilot activities were designed and implemented, not by funders or outside experts but by country nationals. In less than two years, the MOES was implementing a comprehensive initiative to address four of what had been identified as priority issues: instructional quality; the need to continue to encourage the entire Uganda community to send children to school; the learning needs of the pre-school age learner; and the threat of HIV/AIDS.

This document tells that story of how this all happened. It's a story about process...

- ▲ About how basic beliefs and ideas can be translated into policies, actions, and results;
- ▲ About how dialogue and conversations among leaders from different areas can result in coordinated, multisectoral actions and holistic approaches to providing education;
- ▲ About how small groups working collaboratively can create major impact;
- ▲ About how accessing a nation's existing systems and capabilities can bring about change.

It's a story about a Ministry reaching out to the various populations with the hope of a brighter future for the children, their families, and the country as a whole.



1. Major donors/partners include United States Agency for International Development, World Bank, DANIDA, Ireland Aid, GTZ, the Japanese International Development Agency, Plan International, Rädda Barnen, UNESCO, and World Education.

II. Uganda: THE COUNTRY AND THE QUESTION

The UPE programme was launched in 1997. This was not only in recognition of education as a basic right, but it was also to feed into the government's mission to build a modern state and modern economy in Uganda.

*Sam Onek, Commissioner Pre-primary and Primary Education
August 2003*

The Country

Uganda is a small, landlocked country in southeastern Africa. A former British colony, it gained its independence from England in 1962. Although much of the 1970s was characterized by civil strife under the leadership of Idi Amin and Milton Obote, the late 1980s were years of recovery and reconstruction. Today, Uganda is leading African nations in education reform and the reduction of the incidence of HIV/AIDS.

Uganda's Commitment to Basic Education

Although the Government of Uganda has had a goal of providing basic education to all of its citizens since the early 1960s, efforts became more focused in 1987 when a Education Policy Review Commission was established to inquire into the policies governing education in Uganda. The Commission's report in 1989 and a subsequent Government White Paper on Education published in 1992 spurred decisive reforms in the education sector.

The White Paper, in particular, pinpointed a variety of issues to be addressed: inequitable access to basic education; high dropout and low completion rates; barriers; exclusion of various categories of school-aged children; poor quality education; irrelevant curricula; low enrollment rates; and a persistently elitist formal education system. The paper also emphasized the need for special attention for disadvantaged groups in the population. This position was further supported by the Constitution of Uganda (ratified in 1995), which states that education is a basic right for all citizens and called for the decentralization of primary and secondary education and other public services, along with a shift of power and responsibility from central to local government.

Formal Name:	Republic of Uganda
Location:	Eastern Africa, with Kenya on the east, Tanzania and Rwanda on the south, Democratic Republic of Congo on the west, and Sudan on the north
Area:	236,040 sq km (91,135 sq mi)
Area Comparative (US/Int):	Slightly larger than Oregon/Slightly smaller than Ghana
Population:	25,632,794
Age Structure:	0-14 years: 50.8% 15-65 years: 46.8% 65 years and over: 2.4%
Literacy Rate: *	69.9% (male 79.5%; female 60.4%)
HIV/AIDS Adult Prevalence Rate:	5% (2001 estimate)
HIV/AIDS - # of people living with HIV/AIDS:	84,000 (2001 estimate)

Source: CIA - The World Factbook - Uganda.
<http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/ug.html>

*Defined as those age 15 and over who can read and write.



In 1997, the Government of Uganda made an even more tangible commitment to primary education by declaring universal primary education (UPE), a policy that first eliminated tuition for up to four children per family but was revised to exempt all children from tuition fees.² Its goal, as stated by President Yoweri Museveni, was “to empower all Ugandan children with the education to cope with the world and reduce their vulnerability.” In 1998, at Uganda’s first conference on UPE, over 600 stakeholders came together to make an assessment of UPE and plan the way forward. A resulting handbook, “Guidelines on Policy, Roles, and Responsibilities of Stakeholders in the Implementation of Universal Primary Education,” outlined a common approach to addressing UPE development in Uganda.

UPE Stated Policy Objectives

- Establishing, providing, and maintaining quality education;
- Transforming society in a fundamental and positive way;
- Providing the minimum facilities and resources to enable children to enter and remain in school and complete the primary cycle of education;
- Making basic education accessible to the learner and relevant to his/her needs as well as meeting national goals;
- Making education equitable in order to eliminate disparities and inequalities; and
- Ensuring that education is affordable by the majority of Ugandans.

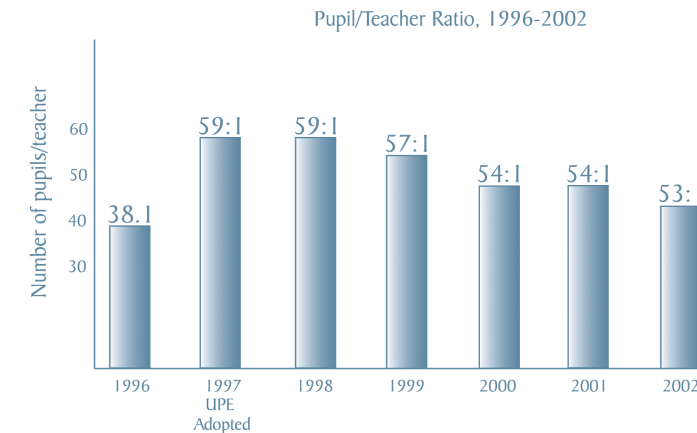
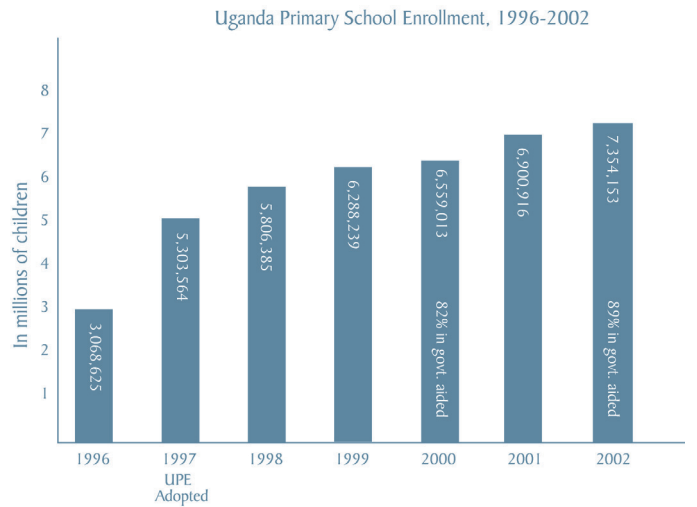
Source: UPE Guidelines 1997.

Universal primary education is a part of Uganda’s Poverty Eradication Action Plan, the overall Government of Uganda (GoU) policy under which the Education Strategic Investment Plan in general and UPE in particular are being implemented. In 2003, 31 percent of the Government’s recurrent budget and 27 percent of the total national budget were allotted to education. Within that allocation, primary education was identified as a GoU priority, and received 63 percent of the education sector budget.³ Most of the resources have been used to establish needed infrastructure, provide scholastic materials, recruit new teachers, and pay teacher salaries. Progress also has been made in complementary basic education and girls’ education at the policy and program levels.

These national actions were reinforced by Uganda’s support of several international agreements on basic education. Uganda

was a signatory to various international conventions and conferences supporting education for all, including the 1990 Education for All Conference in Jomtien, Thailand and the followup Dakar Framework for Action of 2000, where Uganda agreed to universalize primary education and reduce illiteracy.⁴ Uganda also was one of 71 countries that accepted the challenge set at the 1990 World Summit for Children to provide universal access to basic education and completion of primary education by at least 80 percent of its primary school-age children for the year 2000. In 2000, Uganda joined countries worldwide in accepting the United Nation’s Millennium Development Declaration and its related goals.⁵

Results were immediate. Primary enrollment almost doubled within two years after the announcement of UPE, from about 3.068 million in 1996 to more than 5 million in 1997. In 2003, over 7 million pupils were enrolled in government-assisted and private primary schools.



Source: Byamugisha, Albert, Ministry of Education and Sports, 2004.

2. Even though all children are officially exempted from tuition fees, the DHS EdData reports that significant costs remain.
 3. MOES 2003d, p.45.
 4. http://www.unesco.org/education/efa/ed_for_all.
 5. The six Millenium Development goals were to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, achieve universal primary education, promote gender equality and empower women, reduce child mortality, improve maternal health, and combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases.

Challenges of UPE

Not unexpectedly, the increased enrollments resulted in larger class sizes and higher student/teacher ratios. These changes brought new challenges related to a number of areas, including but not limited to instructional quality, constituency support, early childhood development, and the effects of HIV/AIDS.

Instructional Quality

Teachers were not equipped to teach the large numbers of children. The quality of instruction was further hampered by the traditional teacher-centered, large group-oriented instructional practices that had been the classroom norm. With growing class sizes and student/teacher ratios, instructional quality began to decline. Incoming and practicing teachers needed training on how to teach in these new conditions.

Constituency Support

Although the GoU had made considerable progress in achieving education for all, more widespread support was needed. To reach more children, the government felt that people at the grassroots or community level should share a deeper commitment to UPE. Parents, teachers, religious leaders, district officials, local council leaders, members of parliament, and academicians all needed to embrace the concepts and play their part in the successful implementation of UPE. Materials and activities were needed to achieve this goal.

Pre-primary Education

With the declaration of UPE, parents began to enroll even those normally considered too young for school. Schools were not prepared to handle this new population. Teachers were not adequately trained to teach pre-school students. Books, learning materials, and furnishings were not age-appropriate. Planners became concerned that these young learners would have a bad first experience with school and be more likely to drop out in later years.

HIV/AIDS

During the late 1990s, Uganda made considerable progress, particularly among youth, in its fight against HIV/AIDS. This was at least partially due to intense information, education, and communication.

Despite this progress, however, HIV/AIDS remains a serious threat to its younger population. Statistics showed that the majority of

those affected with AIDS in Uganda were babies up to the age of two and sexually active adults aged 20 to 50.⁶ Research showed that 84 percent contracted HIV through sex. School-aged children seemed to be a good group to target for messages about HIV/AIDS prevention, particularly responsible sexuality.

In 2001, President Museveni announced the Presidential Initiative on AIDS Strategy for Communication to Youth (PIASCY), a program “to improve communication on HIV and AIDS to young people” by requiring teachers to talk regularly and directly to primary-level students about the disease. But no particular steps were specified, and minimal funds were available to make this program a reality.

The Question

By 2001, Uganda was a country full of expectations from parents and students, but larger classes, higher pupil/teacher ratios, inadequate teaching practices, and underage children threatened the success of its UPE efforts. The hardest-to-reach, disadvantaged groups were not attending or dropping out. Teachers and parents were falling victim to HIV/AIDS, resulting in more absenteeism by teachers, and an increasing number of children having to drop out due to poverty or the need to help care for family members.

Education planners were faced with the following question:

Given these challenges, how does a country enroll—and retain—all of its primary-level children and provide an acceptable level of quality instruction?

The answer was sought from the resources within.

III. Uganda's Response:

AN OPPORTUNITY FOR VOICE AND ACTION

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.

Margaret Mead

The United States Agency for International Development and other development partners sought ways to work with the MOES to answer the question of how to provide a quality basic education to all of Uganda's children. Both entities considered UPE a priority. With funding available for US project assistance and a request to provide some quick-start, impacting activities, USAID's mission staff considered how to match its interests with MOES priorities. "We started off with a list of six...." said Sarah Mayanja, of USAID/Uganda. "We looked at the proposals that had come and selected those that appeared to fit with our new strategy and the combined strategic objectives."

Together USAID and the MOES selected four mutually acceptable priorities: instructional quality; UPE advocacy; reproductive health/responsible sexuality; and early childhood education. To advance these four priorities, they decided on a strategy with three important elements and three mechanisms for realizing those elements.

The Strategy

A Holistic Approach

Acknowledging that there are various social, economic, cultural, and health factors that affect children's participation in school, planners of this series of activities decided to adopt an approach that addressed the needs of the whole child. The approach was itself multi-sectoral, involving different ministries and technical experts from inside and outside the education sector to address the four priority areas. The underlying premise was that addressing social and health factors in coordination with improving instruction and the learning environment would maximize progress in children's enrollment and performance in primary school. Collaboration and partnership are central to this approach.

Local Ownership

A holistic approach by itself was not enough. USAID and MOES also realized the need for local ownership of the response. Participation of local leaders helped to ensure that the program addressed the needs of Ugandan children as perceived by the people themselves, thus building commitment to and the likelihood of the program's success. In addition, by incorporating



local leaders from the start and building their capacity during program planning and implementation, country nationals could more easily continue implementation after support ended.

Working with existing operating systems and establishing partnerships with Uganda's private sector also were a part of the local ownership agenda. Contracting with local businesses provided these establishments with new income even while sometimes pushing them to expand capacities and skills. Local business involvement also added to community pride in the progress and the outcome of the activities.

Small to All

The priorities needed to be addressed with the people and resources that were available. The MOES had a team of able and committed educators. To support them, USAID funded a long-term Education Policy and Institutional Advisor (EPIA) and allocated monies for several small-scale pilot activities. The goal was to generate action steps that were feasible and replicable, and could bring about results.

The response was to solicit small groups of local stakeholders and technical experts to design interventions that could benefit the larger population. This small-to-all approach also involved testing these interventions in small-scale pilots, reviewing outcomes and making revisions based on pilot test results, and working with USAID and the MOES to identify ways of expanding effective strategies throughout the country.

The Mechanisms

Three mechanisms were identified to help implement these elements: working groups; local businesses and organizations; and the Teacher Development and Management System.

Working Groups

Working groups are small groups of local leaders—from 8 to 15 professionals—who accept the responsibility for planning and managing the desired changes. A real-life action model of the small-to-all concept, this mechanism was envisioned to move country nationals from cosmetic participation or rubber stamping of education activities to project ownership, thus creating further opportunities for sustainability and capacity building. Chaired by an MOES official assigned by the Permanent Secretary, the working groups helped to ensure that the MOES was both knowledgeable of and actively engaged in the proposed interventions and continually responsive to field issues. Furthermore, by providing a regular forum for reporting on activities, working

groups inspired action and accountability. Collaboration among multiple partners is central to the working group concept.

The Ministry established four working groups to correspond with the priority areas that were selected: Teacher Training; UPE; HIV/AIDS Prevention; and Early Childhood Development. In addition to the Ministry official and the USAID technical advisor, each working group comprised other representatives from the MOES and staff from relevant local organizations—established leaders in the community and experts in the chosen priority area.

Working groups began operating from the inception of the project's activities. USAID's long-term advisor provided the conceptual framework, the budget and ceilings, and a list of deliverables based on the USAID-approved proposal. Each working group was then responsible for implementing the entire process—from planning the various interventions, vetting ideas, and conducting assessments to reviewing and approving publications, monitoring activities in the field, and reporting progress. The chairperson of each group provided quarterly updates to the MOES' monitoring and evaluation group, and the Permanent Secretary received monthly briefings. These reporting mechanisms proved to be effective and are currently in use.

Local Organizations

The following Ugandan professional organizations were identified to perform various activities and complete the identified tasks:

Business Synergies Limited: a local research and professional services organization specializing in feasibility studies, project appraisals, and surveys in both the private and public sectors.

Mango Tree Educational Enterprises: a local organization, founded and directed by a former Peace Corps volunteer, that is dedicated to providing Ugandan educators with high quality, durable, locally produced, and affordable learning materials. Mango Tree subcontracted with two smaller, local NGOs to assist with its work: Roses of Mbuya and the Need Foundation.

Roses of Mbuya: An HIV/AIDS Initiative sewing workshop operated by the Mbuya Parish. The initiative provides medical care, and social, emotional, and spiritual support for people in the parish living with HIV/AIDS.

Need Foundation (New Era for the Disabled Person): a charitable organization started in 1997 to improve living conditions for people with disabilities by involving them in income-generating activities and training them in skills such as handicrafts, tailoring, dress-making, shoe-making, and computer skills.

Straight Talk Foundation Limited: a local NGO with particular expertise in communicating health-related messages to adults and youth through newspaper inserts and other print mediums.

TERP Public Relations: a nationally recognized advertising and public relations firm located in Kampala. Incorporated in Uganda in March 1998, TERPS' team of public relations and media strategists provide the East African region with strategic public relations consulting, corporate lobbying, media analysis, and the design of communication strategies for institutions.

All were established businesses in their particular area of expertise and committed their organizations to the task at hand.

In addition, other locally-based resources provided technical support. For example, US Peace Corps volunteers, who were active in Ugandan education and other sectors, assisted with various interventions.

The Teacher Development and Management System

The Teacher Development and Management System (TDMS) is a decentralized system for training and supporting Uganda's pre-service and in-service teachers through a cadre of Coordinating Center Tutors, or CCTs. CCTs are experienced educators who are trained for the program at one of 23 Ministry-supported Ugandan core primary teacher colleges (PTCs). Once trained, CCTs serve as a mobilized support team, providing skills and information to practicing head teachers and teachers within their particular catchment areas. CCTs organize content-specific training sessions at regionally-based coordinating center schools. CCTs

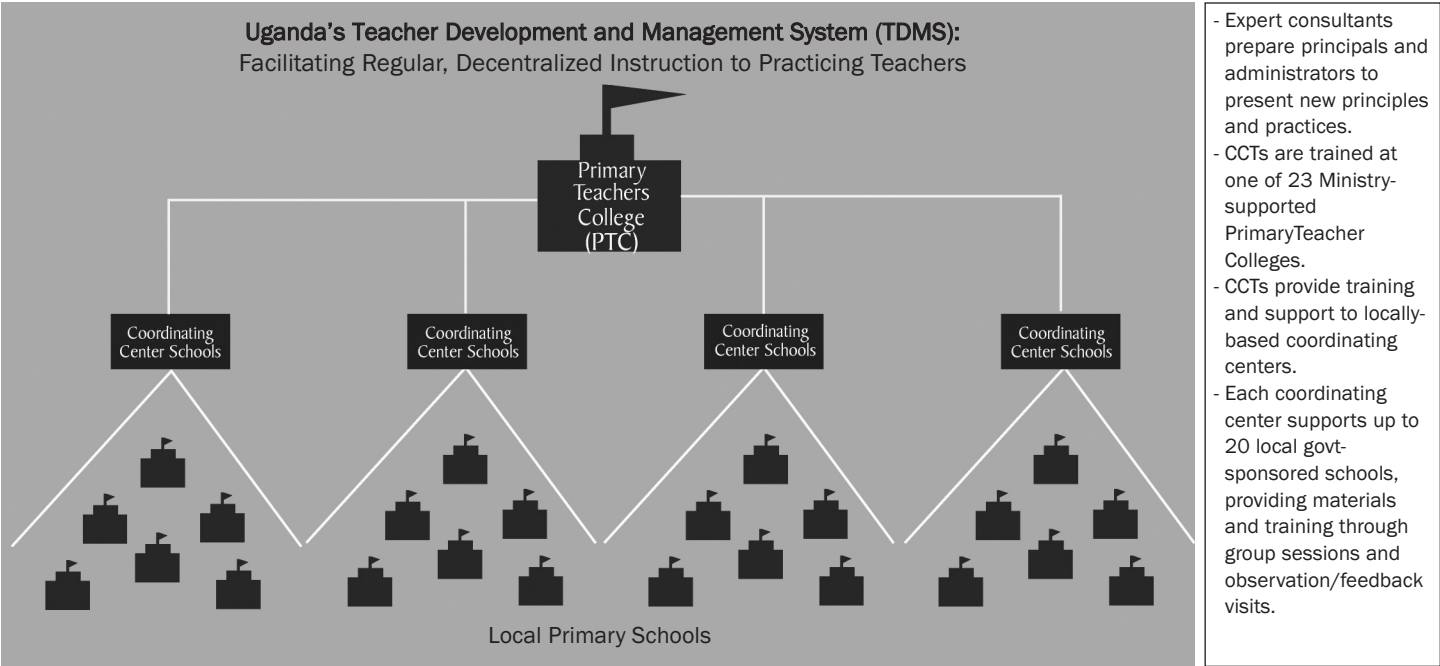
also move from school to school (by foot, bicycle, or motorbike) to observe classroom instruction, review lesson plans, and demonstrate innovative instructional techniques.

Within this structure, practicing teachers in every district in the country receive technical support. It was this system that was chosen for use in transmitting information and resources about the four priority areas to in-service teachers.

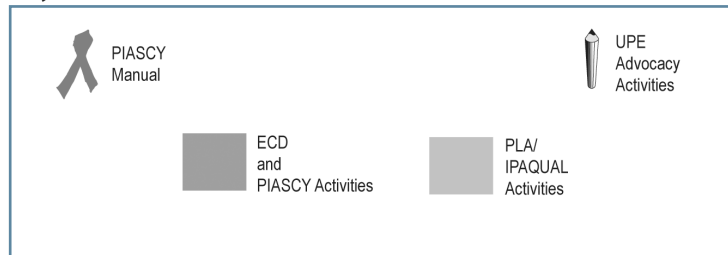
The Process

The working group for each priority area met together in the last quarter of 2002 to plan interventions for addressing the needs in its area. They sought to pilot each intervention in a small setting, and review the outcomes at the end of the implementation period. Depending on the outcomes, the MOES could make plans for expanding the program in other districts of the country or decide another approach. Two PTCs and related districts were selected as pilot sites for three of the priority areas. The Kabulasoke Core PTC and the Mpigi, Sembabule, and Kyenjojo Districts were selected for the teacher effectiveness, or the IPAQUAL, intervention. The Nakeseke Core PTC and the Luwero and Nakasongola Districts were selected as sites for testing the Early Childhood Development and Reproductive Health and Sexuality (PIASCY) activities. UPE advocacy activities were implemented throughout the country. PIASCY manuals were first distributed only in the two pilot districts but were later distributed to every district in Uganda (see map).

With steps outlined and sites selected, the team was ready to implement its plans.



CREATIVE ASSOCIATES INTERNATIONAL²³

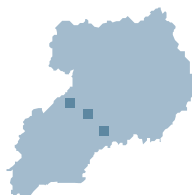


IV. Increasing Teacher Effectiveness:

PARTICIPATORY LEARNING AND ACTION TRAINING

No nation is better than the quality of its education, and no education system is better than the quality of its teachers.

Ssenteza Kajubi, Chancellor
Nkumba University



TRAINING INSTITUTION: KABULASOKE CORE PRIMARY
TEACHERS COLLEGE

PILOT DISTRICTS: MPIGI, SEMBABULE, AND KYENJOJO

Overview

A key element in educational quality is the quality of the instruction being provided by the teachers. The strategy selected for improving teacher effectiveness was Participatory Learning and Action (PLA), a process that prepares teachers to analyze their needs, identify strategies for addressing them, and develop a plan of action.

PLA is based on four components or elements:

- ▲ *Behaviors and Attitudes*, such as role reversal, progressive learning, appreciation for diversity, self-critical awareness, and “handing over the stick” (i.e., letting the learner take over the learning), which are taught to the participating teachers and modeled by the trainers themselves.
- ▲ *Methods and Tools*, including pie charts, maps, matrices, and assessment instruments, which are used in gathering and analyzing information for improving the learning dynamics in the classroom. The data collected from these tools are used by trainers to evaluate the needs and concerns of the teachers and by teachers in analyzing their own situations and planning solutions.
- ▲ *Sharing of Information and Experiences*, through open, two-way communication, which is essential to the success of any participatory practice. PLA participants are introduced to a wide range of communication techniques, from learning circles, where teachers, head teachers, and tutors share information among themselves, to community meetings, where teachers and community stakeholders share ideas and brainstorm solutions.
- ▲ *A Child-centered Learning Process*, which promotes child-centered instructional strategies and classroom environments. Strategies include individualized learning, hands-on instruction, child-to-child, paired, and small group activities, and interactive large-group activities. Children learn by doing as well as hearing and reading.



Implementation

Two PLA instructors—an experienced trainer/program designer and a country national who had completed PLA training—worked together to develop an introductory course for CCTs in Uganda. In Kabaloso, the participating districts considered these basic elements and modified them to reflect the community's current needs. During a preliminary working session, the working group adapted the standard PLA tools and techniques as well as other participatory methods to create the Integrated Participatory Approaches for Quality Learning (IPAQUAL) Pilot Initiative.

IPAQUAL techniques were presented to the participating classroom teachers via the TDMS. Twenty-four CCTs received training on the use of IPAQUAL techniques during a two-week session with PLA experts and locally-selected counterparts. A Training-of-Trainers Manual, a Teacher Training Manual, and a Teachers' Guide were developed to facilitate the training process.

In March and April 2003, CCTs piloted the training in the 24 coordinating centers participating in this pilot. Each CCT was responsible for providing IPAQUAL training to the head teacher and two classroom teachers (referred to as core teachers), in four schools and for supporting and monitoring the implementation of the IPAQUAL methodologies in those classrooms. CCTs reconvened in May to discuss and reflect on the teacher training programs they facilitated and to develop plans for monitoring teacher progress during the second term when teachers were to implement the methods and tools in the classrooms.

To supplement this effort, the Straight Talk Foundation, a local producer of inserts for a national newspaper, *The New Vision*, developed "Teacher Talk"—a four-page pull-out section designed to improve classroom instruction. Each of the three issues focused on a topic of particular concern for teachers, providing background theory, teaching strategies, and letters from teachers, with responses from technical experts. Teacher Talk was distributed in *The New Vision* and through other Straight Talk Foundation distribution networks to all schools. CCTs also disseminated copies and discussed the content with teachers during training and feedback sessions.

The program has provided a boost for trainers, teachers, and students. "The beauty of IPAQUAL is that it addresses the needs of a particular community," said Violet Mugisa, IPAQUAL participatory advisor and local coordinator. "You don't have a program until a need is established....To me, I think that it's learning for living—understanding where you are, what you have, and how to get the best out of what you have....Tools like maps, transit walks, well-

Students have become more committed because they do things on their own....They seem more excited....

*Mother Omoding, CCT
Kabulasoke Core Primary Teachers College*

being ranking, analysis tools all help the child[ren] not only to learn the three Rs but to learn their environment and how to get the best out of their environment...."

CCTs also seem energized and excited about the possibilities for the children. Mother Omoding, a CCT at Kabulasoke PTC said, "IPAQUAL reinvigorated us. It awakened us. We are now putting in more time. It pushes me to work harder. I seem to be getting more life....Students have become more committed because they do things on their own....They seem more excited...."

CCT Twesigye Narris went further. "It is a participatory approach empowering the child in learning. And that's what we call, 'handing over the stick to the learner.' Just as we work as a team here [in the training], the children are encouraged to work in a group, and that explores new learning....Children remember it better when they have done it themselves rather than watching the teacher write it on the board."

Outcomes

In November 2003, at the end of Phase 1, a total of 96 schools, 192 teachers, and 96 principals/head teachers were conversant in the IPAQUAL strategy and were practicing participatory learning techniques.

IPAQUAL Training for Participating Educators Kabulasoke PTC, 2003				
Mpigi:	12 CCTs/CCs	48 schools	96 teachers	48 principals/ head teachers
Sembabule:	4 CCTs/CCs	16 schools	32 teachers	16 head teachers
Kyenjojo:	8 CCTs/CCs	32 schools	64 teachers	32 head teachers
Total:	24 CCTs/CC	96 schools	192 teachers	96 principals/ head teachers

V. UPE Advocacy:

CREATING A COMMON AGENDA

UPE must be perceived and implemented within broad national goals and objectives. Against that background and in that context, all Ugandans must be brought on board to play the various roles and to take responsibility for its implementation and success.

Hon. Geraldine N. Bitamazire
Minister of State for Education and Sports



TRAINING INSTITUTION: N/A

PILOT DISTRICTS: ALL

Overview

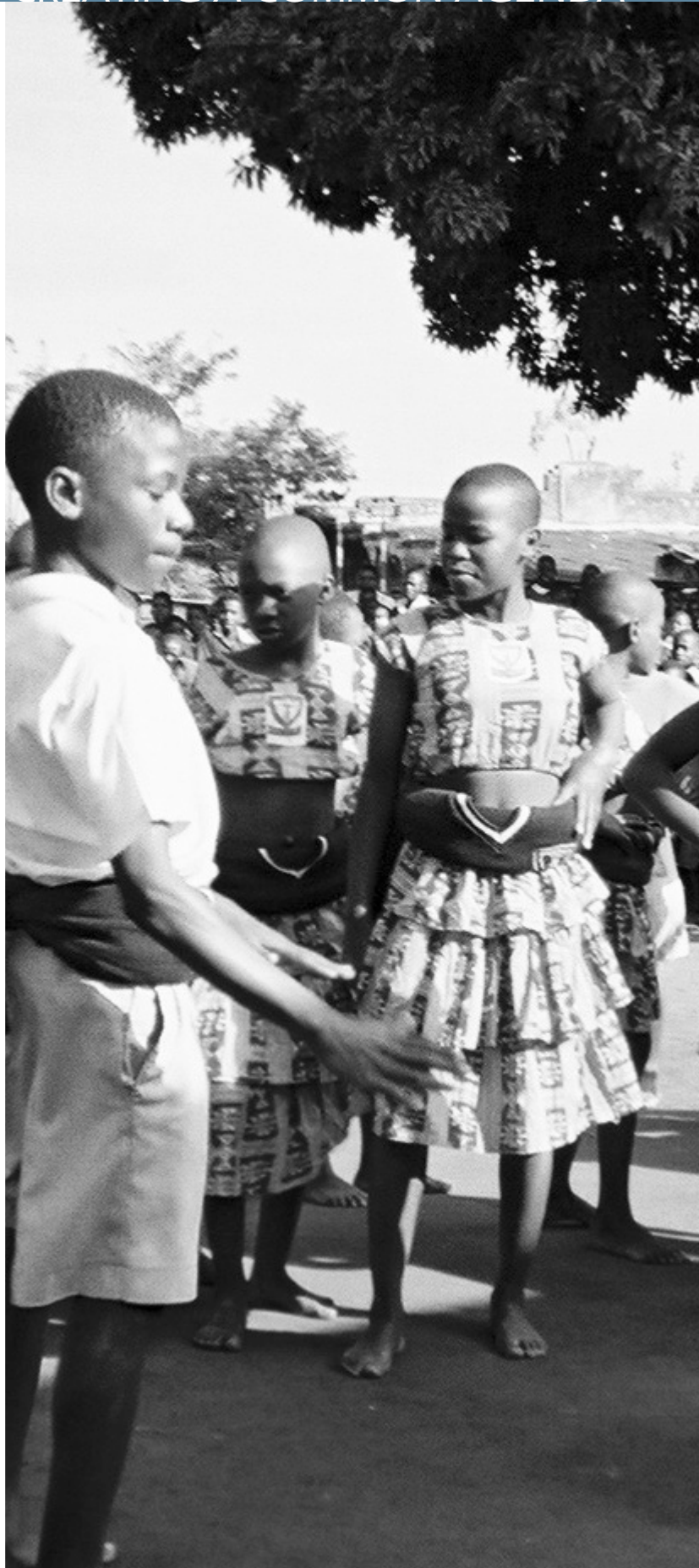
The UPE advocacy component was designed to enhance knowledge, understanding, and action of stakeholders towards a common agenda to support the health and education of children in Uganda. Two elements were central to the advocacy strategy:

- ▲ Meaningful input and feedback from educators in the field to build commitment and identify the real needs and gaps in implementing UPE; and
- ▲ A nationwide, multi-media campaign to communicate to the leaders and the wider community the importance of UPE in providing education for all of Uganda's children, and the need for everyone's support in making it happen.

Implementation

Input and Feedback from Stakeholders in the Field

The MOES implemented a three-tiered process for obtaining input from the various stakeholders in the local districts. First, in November 2002, Business Synergies Limited was contracted to conduct action research in order to study the impact of UPE since its start in 1997. Business Synergies' researchers surveyed a representative sample of stakeholders, including parents, teachers, head teachers, school management committees, community opinion leaders, education managers and planners at the district and sub-district levels, and civil society representatives—NGO and CBO staff, private sector workers at different levels, local government technocrats in sectors related to education, and political leaders at the LC1, LC3, LC5, and RDC levels. Research questions related to nine areas: access to education; school infrastructure and facilities development; improved capacity in school administration and financial management; the disburse-



ment, utilization, and accountability of UPE capitation grants; quality development, assessment, inspection, and monitoring; quality indicators; teacher recruitment, deployment, and payroll management; and stakeholder participation. Research findings were presented to the MOES as evidence of UPE's impact (see below).

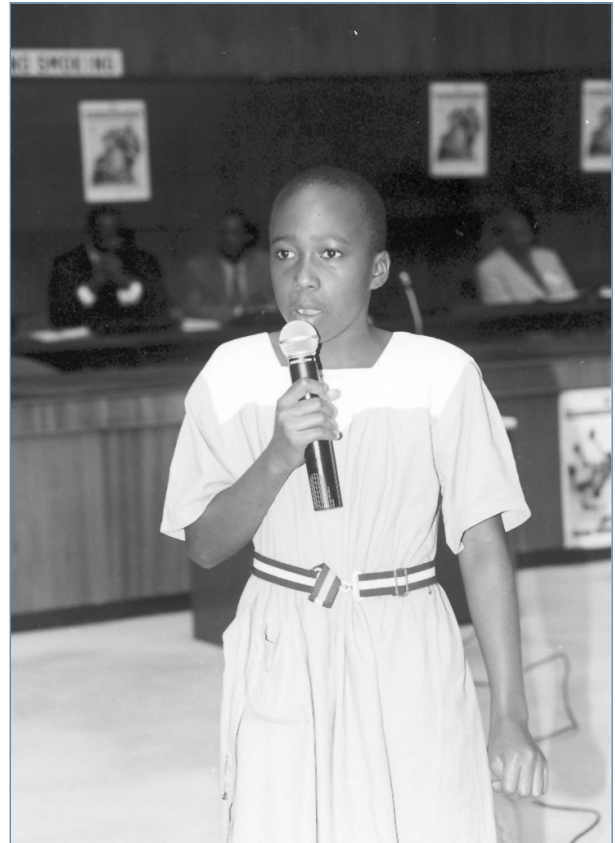
As a second tier of local research, the UPE Working Group organized a series of regional workshops to engage broader sets of stakeholders, specifically district officials, community members, parents, and students, in discussions about UPE. These regional workshops were held in the Western, Central, Eastern, and Northern Regions during February 2003.

The workshops were designed to explore where the UPE program had succeeded and where it still needed improvement. Working group members, who facilitated the workshops, reminded regional stakeholders of the importance of education to development, the goals and objectives of Uganda's UPE program, the roles and responsibilities that each one of them played in achieving UPE, and the importance of each person in making UPE a reality. Participants shared concerns about program implementation. The information and feedback from these workshops were summarized for Ministry and stakeholder consideration.

Input from these two field activities was presented to the Ministry, the education community, and the public at large at the third, culminating activity, "Education for All: The UPE Strategy," the second national conference for stakeholders involved in UPE. This conference was held August 13-14, 2003. A followup to the First UPE National Conference in 1997, which was held one year after President Museveni launched the UPE program, the second conference marked a major milestone, as Uganda's first class of primary 1 pupils under UPE completed its full seven-year primary school cycle.

Over 400 stakeholders—including educators, political and technical/professional leaders, school management committee members, representatives of NGOs and religious organizations, representatives of the Education Funding group, parents, and children—attended the two-day conference. During an opening presentation by His Excellency, President Yoweri Museveni and statements by MOES officials, Uganda reconfirmed its commitment to UPE, acknowledged progress during the past six years, and reiterated its need for continued support to reach the goal of UPE. The findings from Business Synergies' year-long research on the impact of UPE and the four regional workshops were presented. During interactive small-group sessions, participants shared their perceptions of UPE program implementation, expressed their concerns, and reviewed their various roles and responsibilities. Questions were clarified, and partnerships strengthened.

This triangulation helped to ensure that the voices of people in the field were actually captured and considered. Stakeholders left the conference knowledgeable about the achievements of the first six years of UPE, confident that their concerns had been heard, clearer in their roles and responsibilities for advancing the program, and reinspired to continue their efforts.



Since the introduction of UPE, our school has expanded from 300 to 900 pupils. For the first time in our school, there are more girls than boys. This means that before UPE, girls were out of school because they did not have school fees. All of us can read, write, and communicate with people who cannot speak our language. We are no longer studying under trees and in churches. We now have proper classrooms. With many textbooks in our school, we can enjoy reading and even borrow books to take home and read on our own! We used to have bad latrines; now we have permanent ones with water tanks to wash our hands.

*Josephine Nantambi, Student,
Buloba Primary School*

Speaker at UPE National Conference, August 2003

Multi-media Campaign

To communicate the UPE messages to an even wider audience, TERP, the public relations firm, was contracted to develop an advocacy campaign under the umbrella name, “Multi-media for Community Mobilization.” The areas of focus included girl-child education, early childhood development, HIV/AIDS sensitization and PIASCY, TDMS, and nonformal education.

TERP developed a phased roll-out plan that included a national launch presided over by the president and an ongoing nationwide campaign. The campaign included a range of activities, including video documentaries and educational broadcasts, tv and radio talk shows, news stories for the print media, a poster campaign, jingles, and public speaking engagements.

TERP designed its campaign materials and messages to reflect the cultures and diversity of the Ugandan people. For example, in producing the documentaries, TERP used a zoning strategy that considered culture, language, and communication infrastructure as well as proximity to select 10 districts to serve as a representative national sample. Materials were tailored to appeal to each media district. Radio and television spots were translated into various local languages and designated for appropriate districts. Full-color posters were produced and distributed.

TERP planned strategically to get the maximum impact with the resources available. Staffers negotiated with print and visual media representatives for air time for UPE programming. To build cooperation and support, TERP coordinated a meeting of

President Museveni and over 30 journalists from more than 25 media houses nationwide. At this meeting, President Museveni explained the Government’s commitment to enhancing the UPE policy and called on the journalists to objectively report all achievements and weaknesses. TERP also blanketed the news media with press releases about key public figures, including the Queen of Buganda and President Museveni, as they made public appearances in support of UPE.

In March 2003, President Museveni spearheaded the launching of two initiatives — the UPE campaign, and the PIASCY Initiative (see Chapter VI). Represented by Ms. Rebecca Kadaga, the Deputy Speaker of the Parliament, Uganda’s president encouraged stakeholders to support the UPE program and the PIASCY initiative and to embrace them both in Uganda’s UPE plan. As reported by TERP, “the President’s action effectively launched a campaign meant to reach all the corners of the country.”

*You don't have to buy the media to be heard.
You just have to learn to communicate with
them in the manner in which they understand.*

**Obrek Rwabwogo, Managing Consultant
TERP Public Relations**

President Museveni (2nd row, center) met with journalists nationwide to explore coverage of UPE activities.





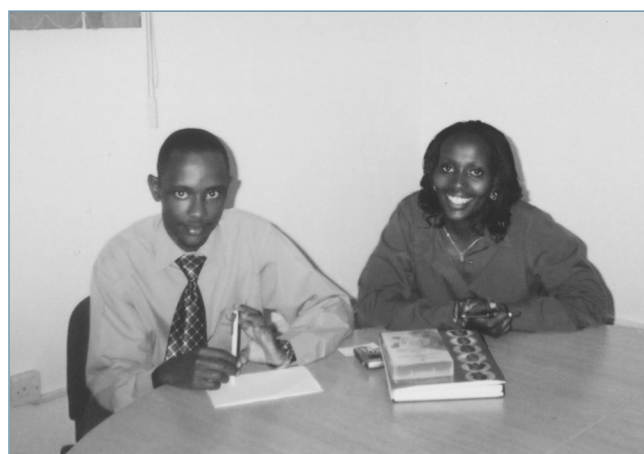
Trained Coordinating Center Tutors distribute "Teacher Talk," the informative newspaper pull-out about effective teaching strategies.

Outcomes

The component resulted in UPE messages disseminated as follows:

- ▲ Three 20-minute video documentaries, "The Teacher Development Management System (TDMS)," "The School Facility Grant (SFG) – Challenges and Achievement," and "Community Participation in the Implementation of UPE Programmes," prepared in English and four local languages (Ateso, Luganda, Luo, and Runyakitara). Videos were shown 10 times from April 30–August 11 on Uganda Television and Wavah Broadcasting Television. Estimated combined viewership is 6.5 million people.
- ▲ Educational broadcasts on classroom construction, the role of stakeholders, the HIV/AIDS prevention programs in schools, and the role of communities, which aired on Uganda television and several FM radio stations.⁷
- ▲ Drama skits, produced in four different languages,⁸ which were presented at the multi-media campaign launch and the Second National UPE Conference and on four radio stations for one month. Copies of skits were made available to local communities and schools for reproduction and use.
- ▲ Radio spots—five per day—and one talk show on various radio stations,⁹ in the local language of the station listed, for one month.

- ▲ Television ads—five per station—in July and August 2003 to announce the Second UPE National Conference and the issues to be discussed.
- ▲ Educational articles each Monday in the "Education Vision" section of *The New Vision*, and several front-page articles in *The New Vision* and *the Monitor*.
- ▲ Featured presentations by national personalities in support of girls' education, to include Her Royal Highness the Nabagereka of Buganda, Ms. Sylvia Naginda Luswata, the First Lady, the Honorable Gerald Namirembe Bitamazire, Ministry of State for Primary Education, and Eng. Irene Muloni, Managing Director, Uganda Distributions Company, Ltd.
- ▲ 12,000 copies each—one for every primary school in the country—of two, full-color UPE posters.
- ▲ 15,000 small brochures summarizing major milestones of the UPE program.
- ▲ 500 copies of *Enhancing Education Quality*, a premier 14-page magazine explaining the successes of UPE.



TERP staffers developed video documentaries, educational broadcasts, radio spots, television ads, and a variety of promotional printouts to promote UPE.

7. Radio stations included Star FM, Capital FM - the Capital Gang Program, Radio One - the Spectrum Show, and Simba FM - Simbawo-Akati Show. Open dialogues called BIMEEZA were aired on Radio One, Simba FM, and Central Broadcasting Service.

8. English, Lugbara, Luganda, and Runyankore/Rukiga.

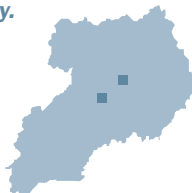
9. Voice of Toro, Masindi Broadcasting, Central Broadcasting Service, Radio Simba, Star FM, Buddu FM, Radio Paidha, Rhino FM, Arua, Voice of Kigezi, Roots FM, Lira FM, Capital FM, Radio One, and Radio Two.

VI. Addressing HIV/AIDS:

INTEGRATING REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RESPONSIBLE SEXUALITY

In spite of the performance they are talking about, the problem is still with us. Let us stand up, to save posterity.

Mr. Joseph Mbusa
Deputy Resident,
District Committee



TRAINING INSTITUTION: NAKASEKE PRIMARY TEACHERS COLLEGE
PILOT DISTRICTS: LUWERO AND NAKASONGOLA

Overview

From 1997-2001, Uganda turned the tide on HIV/AIDS, reducing the prevalence rate from 30 percent in 1996 to 6.1 percent early in the 21st century. Yet, President Museveni acknowledged that much more needed to be done. The seven million primary pupils and one million students in secondary and tertiary institutions, who made up more than 30 percent of the national population, were young enough not to be affected but were at risk.

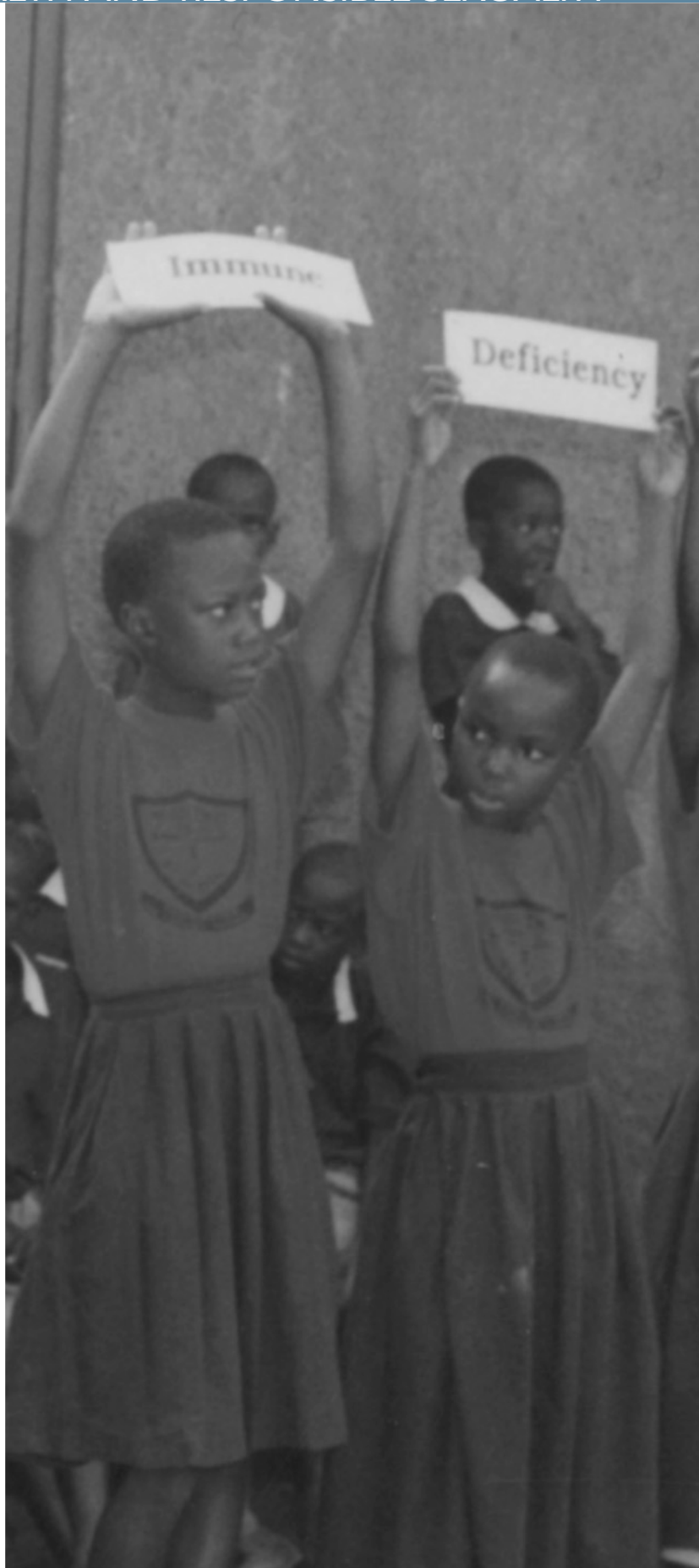
Under his 2001 Presidential Initiative on AIDS Strategy for Communication to Youth (PIASCY), President Museveni outlined three steps for primary school teachers:

- ▲ teach sex education immediately;
- ▲ hold assemblies twice a month and address the children about HIV/AIDS; and

PIASCY Objectives

1. To increase and sustain HIV/AIDS education for school-going children and youth.
2. To increase the capacity of parents, teachers, and health service providers to engage in constructive deliberations with young people on HIV/AIDS.
3. To increase public debate on HIV/AIDS to support youth HIV/AIDS prevention initiatives.
4. To identify, engage, and increase the capacity of communities to assist young people to modify behaviour related to HIV/AIDS.
5. To engage law and policy instruments to support HIV/AIDS prevention initiatives for youth.
6. To foster networking among youth service organizations (YSOs).
7. To train core personnel from different sectors on youth HIV/AIDS prevention.
8. To improve the delivery of services to youth through the "youth-friendly services" in collaboration with partners.
9. To mobilize resources for PIASCY.

Source: MOES n.d.b.



- ▲ with immediate effect, include HIV/AIDS in the curriculum.

Although sex education was already being taught in primary school as a part of the science and health curriculum, President Museveni's directive went one step further, calling for the delivery of preventive messages that would lead to *behavior change and development* among the children.

Implementation

Preparing Materials

In response to this directive, the Ministry's Focal Point Officer organized and convened a Task Force, consisting of representatives from the Ministry and a variety of organizations,¹⁰ to identify and prioritize specific topics and messages and to develop a plan of action for communicating those messages to students. They decided that the focus would be a manual to guide the head teachers and teachers in planning and conducting the mandated assemblies. Content was drafted by selected staff of the Uganda AIDS Commission¹¹ and the MOES, after gaining consensus from the various stakeholders. The Straight Talk Foundation was contracted to assist in designing and producing any products that were to result.

Uganda has had more success in reducing HIV than any other country. But by how much more could Uganda reduce HIV if all pupils were well informed?

PIASCY Handbook

To identify the content, a Health Education Specialist worked in collaboration with the MOES, curriculum developers from Uganda's National Curriculum Development Center (NCDC), and the Straight Talk Foundation as well as representatives from the Ministry of Health and the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE). Participants were invited to discuss what they had been doing in the area of HIV/AIDS prevention for youth and to share the materials being used in their programs. Once materials were reviewed, participants charted the topics, noting the problems of youth and interventions that had been implemented. Together they debated the ages of children that should participate, concepts and messages that would be appropriate at the various primary levels, and the types of activities that would best bring about the desired behavior change. With this framework in hand, the writing team began its task.

The content was eventually organized into three manuals—the primary guidance document and two companion pieces:

- ▲ *The PIASCY Manual: Helping Pupils to Stay Safe*—24 assembly messages for school assemblies for primary school teachers (2 per month) and classroom activities. Classroom activities were organized into four themes: Life Skills, HIV/AIDS, Reproductive Health and Sexuality, and Transmission of Infectious Diseases.
- ▲ *The PIASCY Teacher's Manual: Assembly Messages & Activities for Primary 3-4 & Primary 5-7*—A teacher's manual with messages and related classroom activities organized around the same four themes.
- ▲ *Regional Workshop: PIASCY Training Guide*—A manual to guide trainers in promoting PIASCY.

Ministry officials and practitioners spoke positively about the importance of the initiative, particularly its greater emphasis on process, action, and behavior change. Commented Aggrey Kibenge, Senior Assistant Secretary/Public Relations Officer,

"It is one thing to give the content, the information about HIV/AIDS. But we need to engage children much more to get exposure to good practices and things that can improve the way that they conduct themselves. . . . This kind of empowerment, we think, is one way of contributing to a quality and relevant education for these young people. This can help them continue with their education and can help them stay safe. With them, they can help other people within the society to stay safe. Because when the children get the knowledge and these good practices in school, we expect them to share these practices with members of their families and their communities."

Emmanuel Kusemererwa Araali, working group member, Acting Principal Education Officer, Focal Point Officer for HIV/AIDS Primary and Pre-Primary Department, National Coordinator of Life Skills Education, and committed advocate for HIV/AIDS prevention, reported that the process was challenging but vital to the acceptance and utilization of the PIASCY materials and activities. "Now, everyone is talking about the manual because they have made a contribution and everyone has owned it. . . . It's important to use all of the stakeholders and gatekeepers at different levels. . . . That's what makes the difference."

While some parents have expressed concern about exposing young children to issues of sexuality, Resty Nuziribi, Chairperson of Early Childhood Development, Pre-Primary, countered:

10. The task force included representatives from the Ministry of Health (MOH), Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES), Ministry of Local Government (MLG), Africa Youth Alliance (AYA), AYAAS, Islamic Medical Association of Uganda (IMAU), ACET, CHUSA, AIDS Information Center (AIC), UMSC, Ugandan Catholic Secretariat (UCS), AIDS Integrated Management (AIM), National Curriculum Development Center (NCDC), TASO, the Population Secretariat, and other partners in government and civil society working for behavior change in youth.

11. An organization started by President Museveni in 1992 to coordinate the AIDS activities throughout Uganda.

PIASCY is a landmark, a breakthrough to behavior change for the children of the Republic of Uganda.

***Emmanuel Kusemererwa Araali
Ministry of Education and Sports***

“There are things that the parents should be able to teach their children but the parents cannot. They don’t want to talk about sex with their children – that is our culture....Although in the syllabus the children are supposed to learn reproductive health, [the teachers] just teach it mechanically....But there are some messages, some questions that remain unanswered for the children. And these are the gaps that we try to cover.... Because we realize that this is the vulnerable age, especially in the primary schools. They are innocent, they can easily be exploited, not only by their intimates but by adults themselves.”

Sister Immaculate, principal of St. Mary’s Pre-service Primary Teachers’ College for Girls, also is encouraged by these manuals, particularly because of their potential impact on young girls. “First and foremost, the girl child is still vulnerable,” she said. “We still look at the girl child as a teacher to be, who is going to teach the children. So we see this book as somewhat timely to help our students end up doing for their own sake and at the same time give them the skill to be able to transmit the messages.”

Promoting the Initiative

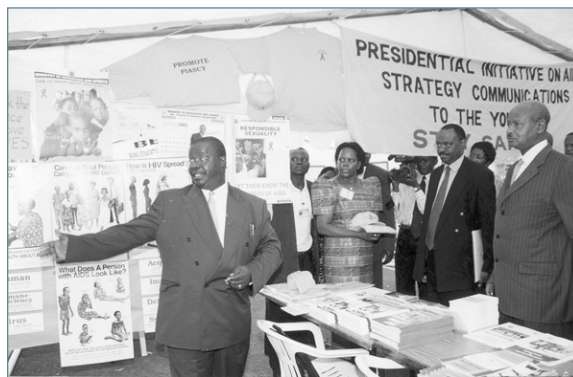
TERP, the local public relations firm, was asked to develop the multi-media campaign to reinforce the PIASCY activities at the school and classroom levels. In March 2003, the national PIASCY Initiative was launched in cooperation with the UPE campaign (see Chapter V). At this national launch, which was attended by thousands of children, youth, and adults, 5,000 pre-primary and primary level tee-shirts, 3,000 child caps, and 2,000 adult caps with the “Be safe” message were distributed. Posters with HIV/AIDS prevention messages were displayed, and drama skits were presented. Radio and television messages on HIV/AIDS



Students sing about the dangers of HIV/AIDS during primary school assemblies.

prevention were aired in the weeks that followed. Straight Talk also developed a newsprint insert, “Young Talk,” to deliver messages to young teens about their health and well-being. Later, posters were distributed to health centres, clinics, and schools. Stakeholders at all levels reviewed materials and discussed applications at the UPE Conference in August 2003.

As with the teacher effectiveness activity, the TDMS was used to introduce the materials and related strategies to head teachers and teachers. For the pilot, seventeen CCTs at the Nakeseke Core PTC were trained. The CCTs then introduced the manual and the related activities to the participating head teachers and classroom teachers in the Luwero and Nakasongola Districts. Later, regional training workshops were used to introduce 539 additional CCTs at 45 PTCs to the PIASCY Training Guide, use of



President Museveni visited the PIASCY booth at 2003 National UPE Conference.

the PIASCY activities in health clubs, guidance and counseling techniques, and indicators for monitoring implementation of the PIASCY initiative. PIASCY primary-level assemblies are conducted in those two districts and throughout the country.

Teachers and students work together to develop ways to introduce the messages for the assemblies. The outcomes are varied, with speeches, songs, dramatizations, stories, competitions, and posters—sometimes entertaining and other times moving—presented by individuals, small groups, or whole classes.

Teachers spoke enthusiastically of their involvement in the PIASCY process. “It is going well. Teachers are actively participating,” commented a senior teacher at the Nakasongola Army Primary

But there are some messages, some questions that remain unanswered for the children. And these are the gaps that we try to cover....

Resty Nuziribi, Chairperson of Early Childhood Development, Pre-Primary

School. "If it is your week, you prepare the message and organize [the activities]. All participate in turn." "Yes, there are changes, because there are strategies....," she continued. "Officers are fighting hard to arrest those who are defiling children... In three years, we have had no pregnancy. They are becoming active in discussing these things...."

Teachers at this school also felt that parents have accepted the idea. "At first they thought that we were trying to make their children do bad things, but later they realized that we are teaching their children to know what would work ... In a general meeting we briefed them...so that they are aware of these things."

Children at another school shared differences between the PIASCY assemblies and other health assemblies. "Ones before have been about cleaning the compounds," said one. "These tell us how to stay safe, to abstain from sex...they tell us of the dangers in playing sex and how HIV/AIDS spreads."

Students also commented on the behavior changes in their fellow classmates as a result of PIASCY. Spurred by messages, clubs, counseling, and peer support, some think that more girls are staying virgins and classmates are avoiding the sharing of razor blades and other risky behaviors. "Now everyone behaves well," said one. "Children know how to stay safe. They have abstained from sex. Before, some were involved," commented another student. "It has helped us so much in our behaviours," said the first student. "We want it to continue."

For the original pilot, the Ministry received 2,000 copies of the two manuals—one for each school in the pilot catchment area. With the program's preliminary acceptance and widespread interest, however, the Ministry soon began exploring ways to obtain more materials for schools throughout Uganda. With additional funding from USAID, additional books were printed. Today, all 13,000 of the government-supported primary schools in Uganda have the first PIASCY Manual.

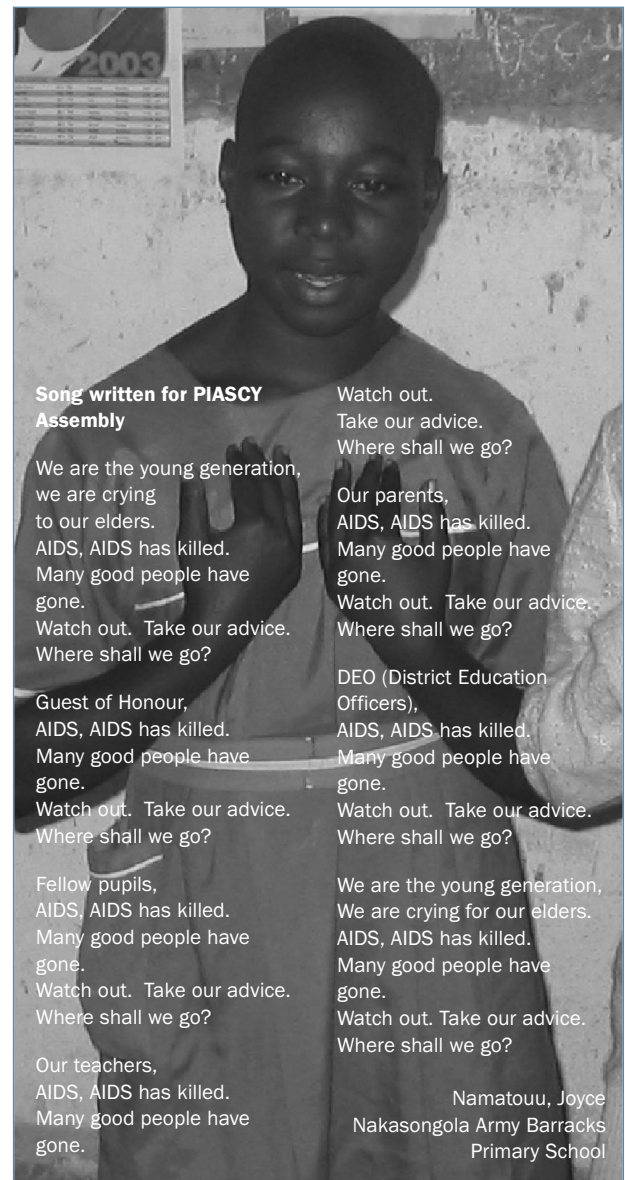
MOES planners are encouraged and excited about the progress to date. "PIASCY is a landmark, a breakthrough to behavior change for the children of the Republic of Uganda," concluded Emmanuel Kusemererwa Araali. "It is the first program to reach the children of Uganda directly, so that we can help to mitigate the epidemic of HIV/AIDS."

Outcomes

The following were the results of this effort:

- ▲ 15,000 copies of the PIASCY messages manual and Teachers' Manual produced, with one copy available for every primary school in the country.

- ▲ 539 CCTs trained in the use of the PIASCY manuals in five regional workshops.
- ▲ 45 principals and 69 deputy principals of PTCs introduced to the PIASCY materials and trained in their use.
- ▲ Over 32,000 primary school teachers to be introduced to PIASCY training strategies.
- ▲ Thousands of primary level students in schools throughout the districts participating in PIASCY assemblies twice a month.



Song written for PIASCY Assembly

We are the young generation,
we are crying
to our elders.
AIDS, AIDS has killed.
Many good people have
gone.
Watch out. Take our advice.
Where shall we go?

Guest of Honour,
AIDS, AIDS has killed.
Many good people have
gone.
Watch out. Take our advice.
Where shall we go?

Fellow pupils,
AIDS, AIDS has killed.
Many good people have
gone.
Watch out. Take our advice.
Where shall we go?

Our teachers,
AIDS, AIDS has killed.
Many good people have
gone.

Watch out.
Take our advice.
Where shall we go?

Our parents,
AIDS, AIDS has killed.
Many good people have
gone.
Watch out. Take our advice.
Where shall we go?

DEO (District Education
Officers),
AIDS, AIDS has killed.
Many good people have
gone.
Watch out. Take our advice.
Where shall we go?

We are the young generation,
We are crying for our elders.
AIDS, AIDS has killed.
Many good people have
gone.
Watch out. Take our advice.
Where shall we go?

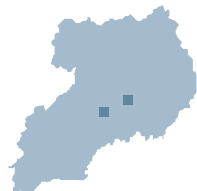
Namatouu, Joyce
Nakasongola Army Barracks
Primary School

VII. Teaching Early Childhood Development:

STARTING EARLY

If you need to have a strong house, you must begin with a strong foundation.

Beatrice Byakutaga
Principal,
Nakaseke Primary Teachers College



TRAINING INSTITUTION: NAKASEKE PRIMARY TEACHERS
COLLEGE
PILOT DISTRICTS: LUWERO AND NAKASONGOLA

Overview

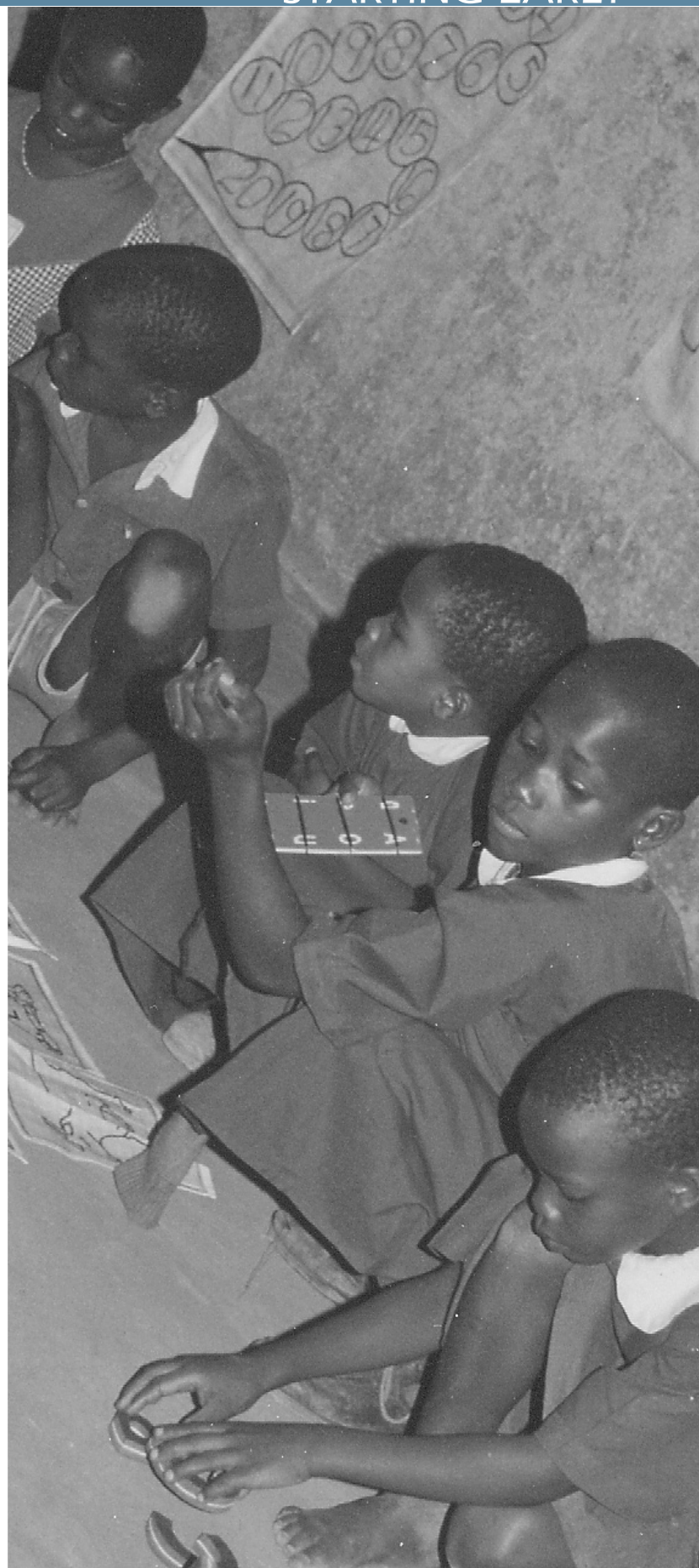
By 2002, over 78,000 pre-primary pupils were enrolled in government-supported and private primary schools. The largest numbers of children were ages 4 and 5, but children as young as 3 and as old as 6 were enrolled in lower/baby, middle, and top classes.¹² Although the primary teacher colleges offered some instruction in early childhood education, the majority of the teachers, instructors, and caretakers of government schools did not have certificates or diplomas in nursery teaching.¹³ Both teachers in training and practicing teachers needed instruction and materials on how to teach this population.

The ECD pilot intervention was designed to expand upon and strengthen what already existed. “Early childhood education has been a part of our original curriculum,” said Beatrice Byakutaga, Principal, Nakaseke Primary Teachers College. “This project came in to give support, to give more emphasis, to give people more knowledge and skills of how to provide early childhood education and the production of materials that can be used for early childhood development (ECD)....”

This intervention involved more people. Instead of having one tutor based at the college teaching the pre-service program, the outreach tutors—the CCTs—went to the field, providing day-to-day contact with teachers practicing in the classrooms.

Implementation

In keeping with the participatory approach to program planning and implementation, the Early Childhood Working Group was formed. This group, comprised of early childhood experts from the National Curriculum Development Centre, the Madrasa Educational Resource Centre, Nakaseke Primary Teachers College, and the MOES, met throughout the last months of 2002 to outline a program and develop a plan. The goal was to pilot the program and its related materials in the Luwero and Nakasongola



12. MOES 2002, pp. 2-4.

13. Ibid., pp. 2-8.

Districts under the Nakaseke Primary Teachers College. If effective, activities would be extended to other districts. A four-tiered approach was used: program design; materials development; training; and media support.

Program Design: The Learning Framework

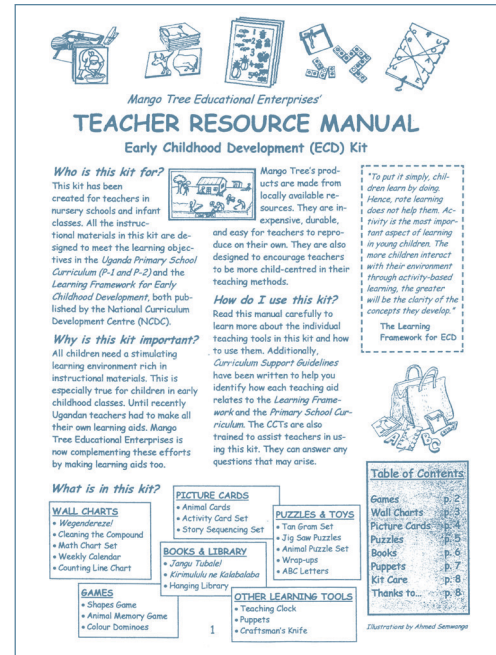
Program design started with a guiding document, “A Learning Framework for Early Childhood Development.” This framework included a definition of early childhood development and its importance to the child, the family, and the community/nation and specified a curriculum for children ages 3-8. Unlike the subject framework in the traditional, primary school curriculum, the early childhood learning framework presented a more holistic approach, addressing the needs of the whole child. Activities to encourage the full development of the young child’s potential were grouped into five major areas: taking care of self; taking care of the environment; relationship with others; developing and using language; and developing and using mathematical concepts and skills. For each of these areas, the framework included information on what a caregiver needs to know about children’s development and suggested activities for developing certain skills.

Learning Materials

Age-appropriate classroom materials also were needed. BEPS contracted Mango Tree Educational Enterprises, a local organization devoted to developing low-cost, participatory learning materials, to work cooperatively with the Early Childhood Working Group to develop these materials.

The final kit, which was approved in December 2002, included more than 20 items that supported the five learning areas in the learning framework. Games, wall charts, picture cards, puzzles, toys, and other learning aids that teachers could use as teaching aids and/or as examples for production of their own classroom materials were provided. All items were made from locally available materials –e.g., grain sacks, rubber pieces, bottle caps, and pieces of wood. The goal was to produce 2,000 of the final kits—one for each of the primary schools in the two catchment areas.

After beginning production, Mango Tree’s Director, Craig Esbeck realized that the job was too big for his eight-person staff. He quickly expanded his workforce and contracted with two other local NGOs—Roses of Mbuya, an NGO with a sewing workshop program for people living with AIDS, and the Need Foundation, an organization established to provide employment and training opportunities to disabled people.



Armed with scissors and sewing machines, workers at both organizations converted bundles of grain bags into standard-sized sheets, which artists then transformed into maps, charts, pictures, and “board” games. Mango Tree carvers shaped wood and rubber into learning pieces and puzzles. Carrying bags for the kits were ordered, and the 2,000 kits were assembled. A companion Teacher Resource Manual was developed to introduce caregivers to the materials in the kit and to present ways to use them in the classroom.

Creatively producing large quantities of quality materials on tight schedules, Mr. Esbeck is convinced that the use of these age-appropriate manipulatives is contributing positively to education reform. “I think teachers really respond to what we are doing, because it’s materials that they already know—it’s grainsacks and bottle-tops. It’s fun, just watching teachers, especially those teachers seeing our materials for the first time.”

I think teachers really respond to what we are doing, because it's materials that they already know.

Craig Esbeck, Director, Mango Tree

Grainne Stevenson, Advisor for Rose of Mbuya's HIV/AIDS Initiative, agrees with the position. "I think the most satisfying part is to see the people who work here get better, improve healthwise through their work....You can see that they get better; and their smiles grow. . . Socially, they have friends that they can work with everyday, and they meet people, whereas before, a lot of them were lonely at home and they were ostracized. They make some money. They gain some happiness. That's the greatest achievement, I think."

Some of us were let from our other jobs. But they [Roses of Mbuya] accepted us -so at least we are able to get another job. We are welcome here.

Seamstress, Roses of Mbuya

As with the other components, the TDMS system was used to provide the training to the ECD teachers. In November 2002, the faculty of Nakaseke Core PTC and education officials from the Luwero and Nakasongola Districts were introduced to the materials, and some revisions were made. Facilitators introduced the CCTs to the materials and the instructional strategies. CCTs then trained the participating head teachers and teachers in the two participating districts. Peace Corps volunteers worked with CCTs to manage the coordinating centers and provide assistance and support. Each participating teacher received one kit. The curriculum is being integrated into the overall primary teacher college curriculum, helping to ensure that the ECD instruction will be sustained.

To reinforce the ECD training being provided by the CCTs, other materials were developed for widespread distribution. The Straight Talk Foundation, the same organization that developed “Teacher Talk,” was contracted to develop and produce “Kids Time,” a four-page newspaper for caregivers of children aged 0 to 8 years old. With easy-to-read language, pictures, color, and illustrations, the publication presents basic ideas and activities for caring for and teaching young children. For example, the May issue, subtitled “Stimulate your young child with talk and care,” presented five concepts: look into the eyes of your baby and talk; make your child healthy; talk to your child about one new thing everyday; encourage your child and praise what the child does well; and explain to the child how to do things. CCTs delivered each edition of the newspaper as they visited schools.



Again, the MOES is positive about the outcomes to date. Margaret Nsereko, Assistant Commissioner for Primary Teacher Education, lauded the birth of this new program. "ECD is still a pilot...we are having it as our baby there.... As a department, what we have done . . . was to have one college train tutors and teachers in ECD. We wanted to come up with the concept of how to handle ECD in teacher education....Now if we come up with this ECD program, parents in the community will be mobilized, will develop a positive attitude towards these young children at their age, and will put them where they fit so that they will develop naturally...I think that

the kind of project that is happening right now will give us what we want so that we can chart out strategies for scaling up.”

Aggrey Kibenge, MOES’ Senior Assistant Secretary and Public Relations Officer, also shared his perspective. “I think in the area of ECD, we have come up with a lot of materials...that help children at that stage of development—help them to learn better, become more sensitive to the world around them, discover themselves more. We have also come up with knowledge and skills that can help the caregivers and the people who are handling the young people do it better.”

Outcomes

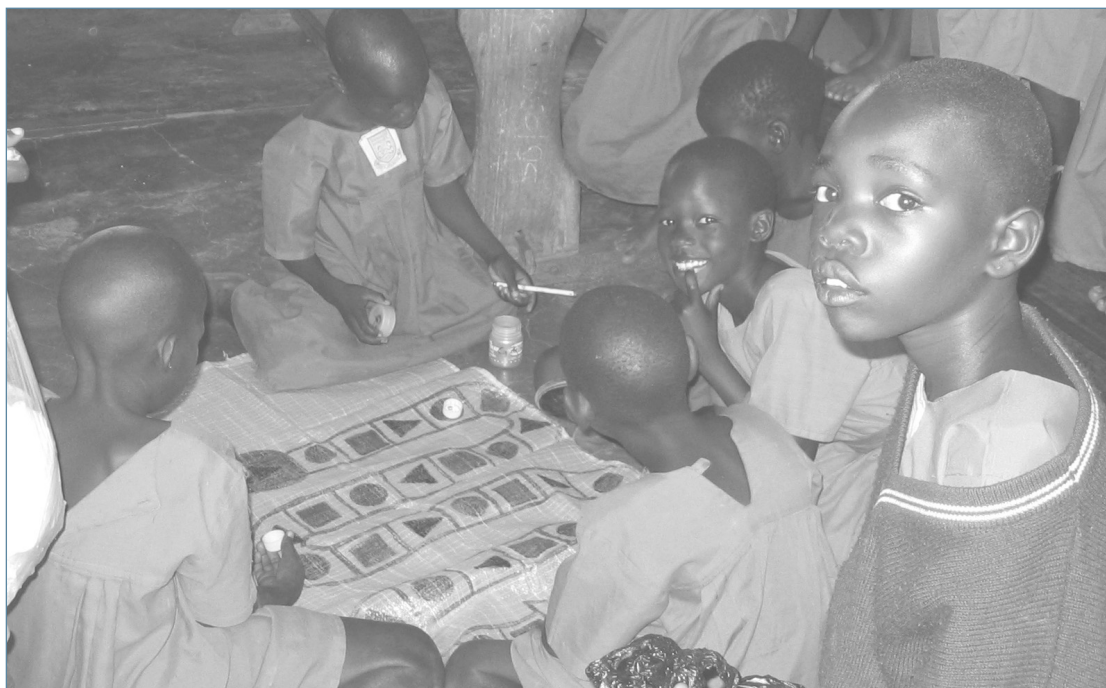
The following resulted from the ECD activities:

- ▲ 2,000 early childhood learning kits, distributed to 500+ schools in the Luwero and Nakasongola Districts.
- ▲ CCTs trained on how to use the ECD kits.
- ▲ Hundreds of teachers trained in the principles of ECD and the use of the ECD learning kit.
- ▲ 1,000 full-color calendars distributed to teachers in government-aided schools in the Luwero and Nakasongola Districts.
- ▲ 360,000 copies of the newsprint, “Kids Time”, produced and distributed to caregivers and parents. For the third issue, 200,000 copies were published in Luganda, the local language.
- ▲ 3,000 “Kids Time” tee shirts distributed to teachers and caregivers in the pilot district.



PTC Principal, CCTs, and Peace Corps volunteer displayed new ECD materials at regional resource center.

Students learn through play using locally developed materials.



VIII. Challenges

. . . What I can say is that it is very challenging to work with this kind of community development project, but I can also safely say that there are great benefits to it....It's tremendous to see how little work it takes to make a lot of people happy.

Grainne Stevenson, Advisor, Social Support Programme, Roses of Mbuya HIV/AIDS Initiative

Implementing a comprehensive set of activities in the Uganda initiative was not without its challenges. A variety of difficulties surfaced, several of which are discussed briefly here: transforming the vision; local ownership; consensus building; language of choice; transportation; sufficient resources; and change. Each challenge is followed by the MOES' response to that challenge.

Transforming the Vision

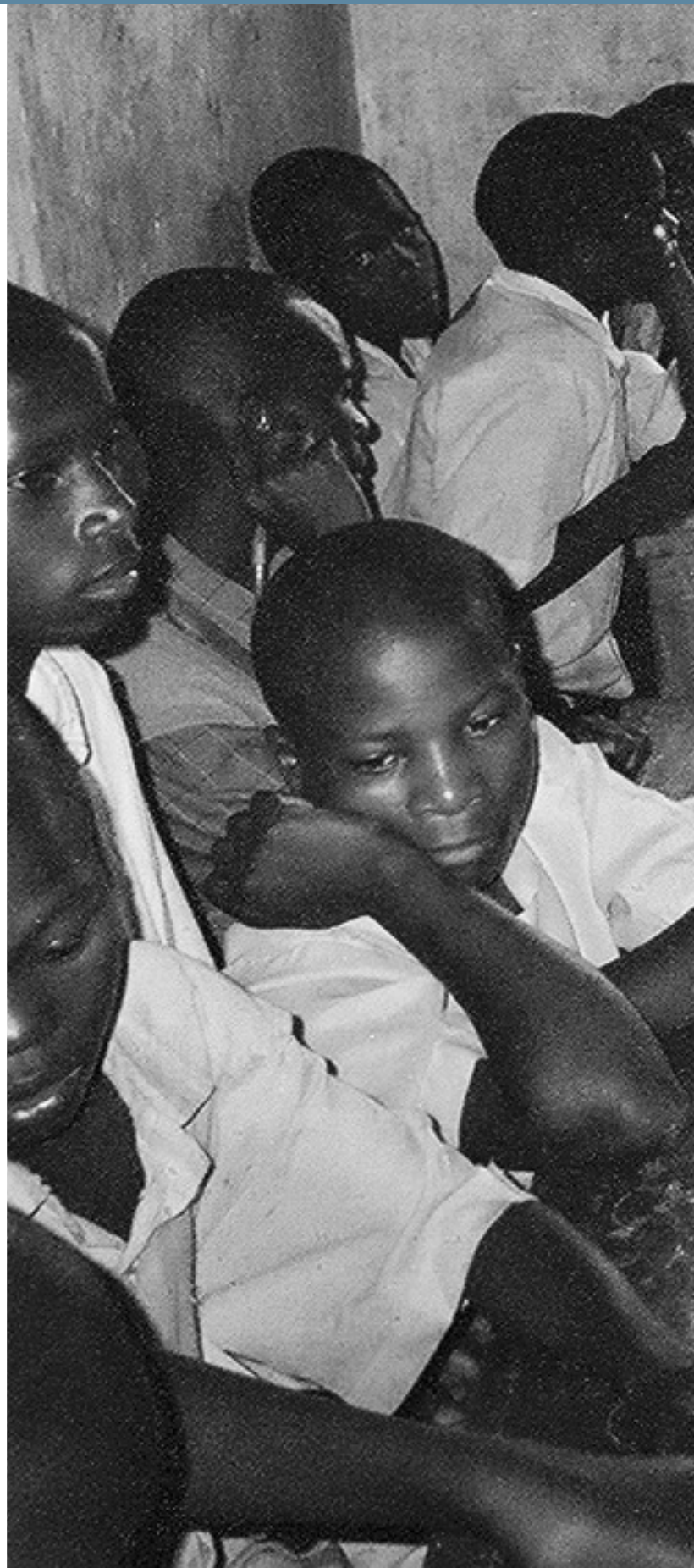
As shared by Sarah Mayanja, USAID's Education Officer, transforming ideas into doable activities was a major challenge. "When there are big things, it's hard to know where to begin....Getting to see those ideas coming to something that can be implemented is difficult....A second challenge is expansion. . . because we are doing small projects....How do we expand them to have a bigger impact?"

The successful transformation of ideas hinged at least partially on focused discussions with a wide range of stakeholders on action steps that were manageable and visible. In addition, small-scale interventions minimized fear of failure and the need for large investments at the onset. In seeking solutions for reaching a larger target group, the Ministry and BEPS worked cooperatively to design a phased roll out for some of the strategic activities planned for Phase II. Some best practices have encouraged other development partners to pursue funding on a regional basis. Furthermore, the MOES has included successful components from the pilots into its Medium-term Budgetary Framework for 2004-2005. New ideas are considered and explored.

Local Ownership

Local ownership, through meaningful involvement in project planning and implementation, is often a goal that is not realized in development projects. The ideas and input of country nationals are often overshadowed by international experts providing technical support or donors who have funded particular activities.

For USAID, local involvement in designing, implementing, and monitoring each intervention of the funded UPE strategies was a



key element. USAID worked cooperatively with the MOES to outline a basic framework for the work to be done and funded a long-term advisor to help guide and support and liaise with the Ministry and the agency. Project leadership was largely left to the MOES itself, through the working groups and Ministry involvement.

Consensus Building

Building consensus—getting all of the members of a group to agree on the issues and how to respond to them—can be particularly difficult when members of the group represent different technical areas, backgrounds, and constituencies. Perhaps the best example of an issue where consensus was needed was the introduction of HIV/AIDS prevention training to the primary school-age population. Discussing reproductive health and responsible sexuality is a sensitive topic, particularly in a culture where these issues are not generally openly aired. Yet President Museveni's PIASCY initiative called for assemblies for levels 3-4 and 5-7 in every primary school twice a month. What to present in those assemblies became a major topic of discussion.

The MOES' response was not to avoid this sensitive topic but rather to bring all of the interested parties together to brainstorm solutions. Ministry leaders emphasized the need for and importance of informing even very young children before they became victims of the disease. Messages and activities were designed for different ages and levels. As a result, a first series of messages has been disseminated. Discussions continue.

Language of Choice

Unlike the ECD, PIASCY, and PLA interventions that were piloted on a small scale, the UPE advocacy campaign was developed for national distribution. In a country with English and a variety of local languages spoken, rural and urban populations, and different tribes and kingdoms, developing messages and materials to reach all audiences created a particular challenge. Translation is expensive but necessary to reach grassroots populations. Even after a decision to translate has been made, other questions remain: What messages and documents should be translated? What language(s) should be used? What mediums should be used for broadcasts? Which children and adults should be featured?

As stated earlier, TERP, the advertising firm, addressed the language and diversity issues by identifying zones of districts that were similar to each other in terms of language, media capability, language, and culture. Zone-targeted media messages were produced and aired.

Transportation

Training the head teachers and teachers already practicing in the classroom depended primarily on the Coordinating Center Tutors (CCTs) being able to get to the coordinating centers and schools to provide training, monitoring, and feedback sessions. Transportation was needed, particularly in isolated rural areas, where schools were often far apart. The TDMS could only offer motorcycles and bicycles, some of which were in aging condition.

To help overcome this challenge, USAID included some additional monies in the operating budget for repairs and petrol. CCTs utilize the vehicles that are available to travel to the various pilot centers to communicate the new information. Whenever possible, CCTs link with other USAID and other-donor-funded efforts to move from one place to another.

Sufficient Resources

Supplying adequate numbers of books and other materials to support the effort has presented its challenges. For example, in the ECD pilot effort, every participating classroom in the two pilot districts received an early childhood education kit. This distribution, which totaled 2,000 kits, was a significant accomplishment but still not enough materials for a class of 50 to 60 children. Teachers' use of the materials is sometimes hampered if they are not able to engage the entire classroom in small group activities.

Teachers have responded creatively. Using the kit materials as models, teachers have made additional sets using other also locally available materials so that several groups of children in the classroom can use them. Other teachers allow one-two groups of children to play with the manipulatives while they present a lesson to another group, and yet another group works on a written assignment.

Having sufficient resources is a constant challenge when launching new activities. Considering and testing creative, innovative ideas and alliances help to satisfy program needs despite resource limitations.

Serving Children from Trauma Situations

Initiating education reform activities within the context of insurgencies and related trauma is a serious problem that is creating new challenges for Uganda's UPE effort, particularly in the North. Governments are often challenged as to how to provide basic education in areas where basic safety is an issue and where children are traumatized to focus on reading and writing.

While outside agencies are attempting to address this situation, Uganda's MOES is becoming increasingly aware that providing education for children from war-torn situations needs to be a function of the government itself. Activities that allow constructive outlets for feelings and emotions and that introduce coping skills can be incorporated. Instructors can be trained in student assessment, counseling techniques, and resources for assistance.

Change

Change is difficult and often meets resistance. People are often reluctant to try something new. Convincing teachers to employ methodologies that differ from those that they have known or experienced takes time and patience. Commented Lawrence Chondo, Principal, Kabalasoke PTC, "Teachers tend to refuse to use this method because it takes a little more thinking. It requires making things—not just the content plan, but the materials to use... Teaching teachers how to teach new content using practical methods—that's the challenge."

The TDMS, with its visiting CCTs, has helped to promote the application of the new interventions. Through regular visits, with monitoring and feedback sessions, CCTs observe the use of new methodologies, reinforce progress, answer questions, and help teachers to improve. Regularly scheduled refresher sessions reinforce skills and maintain a sense of team.



IX. An Opportunity for Voice and Action:

A RECAP

There is hope for success. The impact has been felt.

Lawrence Ndagije
Parent

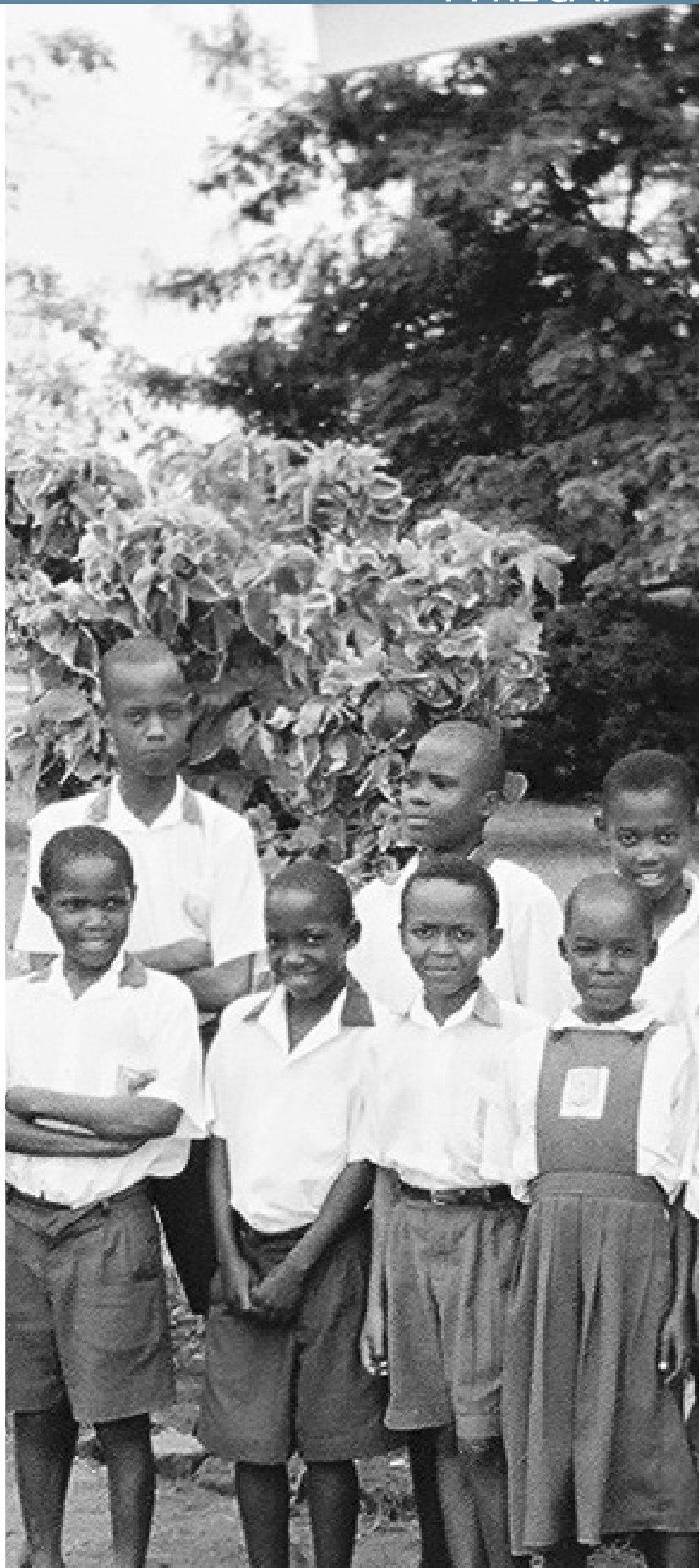
The question of how to provide quality basic education for all after the announcement of UPE was a thought- and action-provoking one for Uganda and its Ministry of Education and Sports. The Ministry chose to address the question from multiple perspectives, including in its plan programs to introduce more participatory instructional practices to its teachers, reproductive health and sexuality to all primary-level students, and early childhood instruction to the underage enrollees. At the same time, the Ministry continued reaching out to communities to build a stronger constituency for basic education. USAID, a major supporter of education reform in Uganda, provided funding, but Ugandans led the interventions.

And it appears to be working, not just because of the multi-sectoral approach, but also because of the process that was used to design, implement, and monitor the approach. The Government and the Ministry were empowered to work and design. Leaders from the public, private, and NGO sectors were invited to participate. Together they developed a framework for action. "Although these programs have just begun, we still see that they have gained a lot of momentum, and I know that in time they will definitely have an impact," said Sarah Mayanja, USAID/Kampala. "I cannot say that we have been 100 percent successful in achieving all the goals, because it is a mammoth task....But we are partners in development, so we have worked with the Ministry of Education and Sports to try and achieve the set goals."

We are partners in development, so we have worked with the Ministry of Education and Sports to try and achieve the set goals.

Sarah Mayanja, Education Officer
USAID/Kampala

Outcomes have not yet been statistically measured. Yet the qualitative data suggest that UPE and quality education can coexist - if the leadership is willing to acknowledge and respond to the side issues that such a policy can create. A collaborative approach, with open communication, resource and idea sharing, a unified agenda, and local ownership, helps to ensure that universal primary education, or any other mutually agreed upon goal, can be achieved. The BEPS Activity provided a vehicle for



using collaboration to respond to emerging needs, offering a means of identifying gaps and addressing them in creative and innovative ways.

It should be noted that the varied BEPS-supported activities—teacher development, UPE advocacy, reproductive health and sexuality, and early childhood development—were not implemented in isolation. Other education projects were and continue to be supported by various international organizations, including USAID and the previously mentioned Education Funding Agencies Group. Communication and collaboration between and among these other parties is furthering progress towards education for all.

Finally, any summary of the BEPS-supported UPE activities in Uganda would not be complete without some discussion about the importance of leadership and the role of leadership in this effort. For this effort, leadership is top-down, with President Museveni showing commitment to UPE with words, presence, and financial support. He has been an active participant and a visible presence at major planning and launching sessions. He announced and later helped launch the PIASCY Initiative in March 2003; he opened the National Conference on UPE in August 2003 and spent hours visiting the literacy exhibits set up by public and private sector organizations. This same type of commitment was encouraged at the Ministry level, with heads of departments, including the Head of Pre and Primary Education, Teacher Education, and the Education Planning Unit carving time from their already crowded schedules to chair working groups and lead the membership in deciding, designing, implementing, and monitoring each intervention.

The able leadership of the EPIA, Renuka Pillay, was praised by many interviewees. An experienced educator with years of experience with TDMS and a previously completed SUPER project, she brings an intimate knowledge of Uganda and the educational context as well as a conviction that people, working individually and collectively, can change the world. "We used to talk about the three Rs - reading, writing, and arithmetic," said Ms. Pillay. "I talk about the three Cs: *conviction*, that we can make a difference; *commitment* as individuals and as leaders; and *collective action* to make it happen. We can do it, but we need to do it together."

UPE is a major commitment that requires careful planning and commitment to make it happen. Reaching out to all—individuals, funding agencies, NGOs, district officials, communities, and religious organizations to achieve collective collaboration in providing education for all children regardless of their language, location, abilities, or skills—and reaching inside to tap the talents and visions of local stakeholders can achieve the goal of quality education for all.

What has been most rewarding is seeing the trainees who now know where the power for change lies—that they have the power for change.

Margaret Nsereko
Assistant Commissioner
Primary Teacher Education



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